

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 DPW-01 AID-20 IO-14

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O R 161059Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4753

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

USDEL JEC PARIS UNN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, VS

SUBJECT: MAY 16 PRESS CONFERENCE BY FOREIGN MINISTER: QUESTIONS
AND ANSWERES

1. THE FOLLOWING REPORT ON THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD OF
FOREIGN MINISTER VUONG VAN BAC'S MAY 16 PRESS CONFERENCE IS A
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PARAPHRASE BASED ON EXTENSIVE NOTES TAKEN BY AN EMBASSY

OFFICER. THE MINISTER'S OPENING STATEMENT IS BEING REPORTED
SEPTEL.

2. BEGIN TEXT: Q:(REUTERS) HAS ANY PROGRESS BEEN MADE IN
RESOLVING THE DISPUTE OVER PRIVILEGES IN THE TPJMC?

3 A: AS YOU KNOW, WHEN THE COMMUNISTS BOYCOTTED THE TPJMC THEY
CLAIMED THE RVN HAD NOT OBSERVED THEIR PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.
I WANT TO STRESS THE FALSE NATURE OF THE COMMUNIST REASONING.
THEY CLAIM ALL THEIR PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES WERE SUPPRESSED
BU THIS IS NOT TRUE. THEY STILL ENJOY THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUN-
NITIES CONTAINED IN THE ELEVEN AGREED POINTS GUARANTEEING THEIR
SECURITY, INVIOABILITY, LIAISON WITH HIGHER AND LOWER LEVELS,
HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS WITH OTHER DELEGATIONS,
ETC.

4. THEY ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT THREE THINGS: (1) THEY PROTEST
THE FACT THERE ARE NO WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCES. BUT I MUST STRESS
THAT THE HOLDING OF SUCH PRESS CONFERENCES IS NOT INCLUDED IN
THE AGREED ELEVEN POINTS. THOSE PRESS CONFERENCES WERE A FACILITY
UNILATERALLY GRANTED BY THE GVN TO THE COMMUNIST SIDE. THEY CAN
ONLY BE RESUMED WHEN THE COMMUNIST USE THESE FACILITIES FOR
CONSTRUCTIVE PURPOSES, THE PURPOSES OF THE TPJMC, AND TO IMPROVE
THE CHANCES FOR PEACE. IF THEY ARE USED FOR SABOTAGE OF THE
AGREEMENT THEY CANNOT BE RESUMED. THE GVN WILL RECONSIDER ITS
DECISION IF THERE ARE ANY INDICATIONS THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE
GOODWILL FOR PEACE AND WOULD NO LONGER USE THE PRESS CONFERENCES
FOR PROPAGANDA. (2) THE COMMUNISTS PROTEST THAT THE SAIGON-LOC NINH
FLIGHTS ARE NO LONGER SUPPLIED, AND IT IS TRUE THAT THESE
FLIGHTS ARE INCLUDED UNDER POINT ELEVEN OF THE AGREED PRIVILEGES
AND IMMUNITIES. BUT THE FIRST POINT OF THE ELEVEN SAYS THAT SE-
CURITY MUST BE GUARANTEED FOR BOTH SIDES. THE SECURITY OF BOTH
FLIGHT PERSONNEL AND DELEGATION MEMBERS MUST BE GUARANTEED,
BUT ONE GVN FLIGHT CREW MEMBER HAS BEEN KILLED. ALSO THE
COMMUNISTS USE THE AIR CORRIDOR TO LAUNCH GROUND OPERATIONS
UNDERNEATH IT. THE SAIGON-LOC NINH FLIGHTS CAN BE RESUMED AFTER
THE COMMUNISTS GUARANTEE THE SECURITY OF PERSONNEL AND MEMBERS
OF THE GVN DELEGATION TO THE TPJMC.

(3) THE COMMUNISTS COMPLAIN THAT THEY HAVE NO TELEPHONE CONTACTS
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OUTSIDE THEIR COMPOUND. BUT THIS IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE ELEVEN
POINTS AND WAS A FACILITY GIVEN BY THE GVN TO THE COMMUNISTS.
COMMUNICATIONS ARE ONLY GUARANTEED WITH THE ICCS, CONTRACTORS,
AND OTHER DELEGATIONS IN THE TWO AND FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY
COMMISSIONS. THE GVN GRANTED THE FACILITY TO THE COMMUNISTS TO
CONTACT OTHER PERSONS ALSO, BUT THIS PRIVILEGE WAS ABUSED BY THEM.

5. IN CONCLUSION THERE HAS BEEN NO VIOLATION BY THE GVN OF

PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE COMMUNIST SIDE.

6. Q: (NYT) THE INDONESIAN INFORMATION MINISTER HAS MADE PESSIMISTIC REMARKS ABOUT REMAINING IN THE ICCS. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THIS?

7. A: AS STATED CLEARLY IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT TWO DAYS AGO AND IN MY STATEMENT TODAY, THE RVN BELIEVES THE ICCS MUST CONTINUE ITS FUNCTIONS AND THE GVN IS ALWAYS READY TO COOPERATE, ASSIST AND PROTECT IT IN ITS FUNCTIONS. IN THIS SPIRIT, WE HOPE THE INDONESIANS WILL REMAIN IN THE ICCS. WE HOPE THE DEPARTURE OF THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION WILL NOT TAKE PLACE, BUT IF BY ANY CHANCE THIS DOES HAPPEN THE BLAME WILL BE ENTIRELY ON THE COMMUNIST SIDE WHICH UNILATERALLY SUSPENDED MEETINGS OF THE TPJMC. AS THE INDONESIANS HAVE SAID, MEETINGS BETWEEN THE TWO VIETNAMESE SIDES ARE NECESSARY FOR THE WORK OF THE ICCS. BY SUSPENDING ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE TPJMC, THE COMMUNIST SIDE HAS MADE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ICCS VERY DIFFICULT. THE CANADIAN DELEGATION EARLIER LEFT THE ICCS AND STATEMENTS OF AUTHORITATIVE MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION MADE IT CLEAR THE CAUSE WAS THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNISTS.

8. Q: (VIETNAMESE REPORTER) YOU SAID THE GVN IS WILLING TO RETURN TO THE CONFERENCE AT LA CELLE-ST. CLOUD AFTER THE COMMUNISTS PROVE THEIR GOODWILL BY "CONCRETE ACTS". COULD YOU GIVE EXAMPLES OF SUCH CONCRETE ACTS?

9. A: THE GVN IS PREPARED TO RETURN TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE AT LA CELLE-ST. CLOUD AS SOON AS THE COMMUNIST SIDE PROVES ITS GOODWILL FOR PEACE THROUGH CONCRETE ACTS. ANYONE CAN THINK OF WHAT THEY MIGHT BE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE GVN DELEGATION IN THE TPJMC HAS CALLED ON THE COMMUNISTS MANY TIMES TO (1) STOP LARGE-SCALE ATTACKS AGAINST THE RVN; (2) STOP INFILTRATION OF MEN AND ARMS

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INTO SVN; (3) WITHDRAW FROM AREAS OCCUPIED AFTER JANUARY 28, 1973; (4) SHOW A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ICCS. (NOTE: INTERPRETER ERRONEOUSLY TRANSLATED POINT 3 AS "WITHDRAW PERSONNEL AND ARMAMENTS INFILTRATED INTO SVN AFTER SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT".) THESE ARE SOME THINGS THE COMMUNISTS CAN DO TO SHOW THEIR GOODWILL FOR PEACE. AS FOR THE GVN, IT VERY MUCH WANTS TO RETURN TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE AT LA CELLE-ST. CLOUD.

10. Q: (NYT) WHAT WAS THE OFFICIAL GVN REPLY TO THE OTHER SIDE'S SIX-POINT PLAN RECENTLY PRESENTED IN PARIS?

11. A: THE OFFICIAL REACTION OF THE GVN TO THE PROPOSAL OF MARCH 22 WAS GIVEN TO YOU EARLIER BUT I WILL REPEAT IT. THE OFFICIAL RESPONSE IS THE GVN DELEGATION FOUR-POINT PROPOSAL WHICH, IF ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER SIDE, COULD QUICKLY HAVE ACHIEVED PEACE.

12. I WILL GIVE SOME COMMENTS ON THE SIX POINTS. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY INCLUDED A JOINT APPEAL FOR A CEASEFIRE BUT WE HAVE HAD A LOT OF EXPERIENCE WITH SUCH APPEALS FOR A CEASEFIRE AND EVERYONE KNOWS THE RESULT. THERE WAS SUCH AN APPEAL AFTER THE PARIS AGREEMENT, AFTER THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE, AND ONE BY THE FPJMC (NOTE--ON 2/19/73). BUT THE FIGHTING CONTINUES. SO WHAT IS NEEDED IS NOT A NEW APPEAL BUT INSTITUTIONS TO CONTROL A CEASEFIRE AND MAKE IT EFFECTIVE. THE PARIS AGREEMENT CALLED FOR THE TPJMC TO BE DEPLOYED TO LOCAL LEVELS TO CONTROL THE CEASEFIRE AND TO WORK WITH ICCS. WE DEPLOYED TO ALL LEVELS, BUT THE COMMUNIST SIDE IS PRESENT ONLY IN SAIGON. THE PARIS AGREEMENT CALLED FOR THE DESIGNATION OF POINTS OF ENTRY TO CONTROL THE FLOW OF MEN AND MATERIAL. WE DESIGNATED OUR SIX POINTS BUT THE COMMUNIST SIDE DID NOT. THE CEASEFIRE COULD ALSO BE ACHIEVED IF THE ICCS WERE PERMITTED TO FUNCTION BUT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE NEVER PERMITTED IT TO FUNCTION IN THE BORDER AREAS WHERE THEY ARE PROVISIONALLY STATIONING THEIR TROOPS. SO AS WE LOOK AT THE RECORD THE COMMUNISTS ONLY WANT TO TALK ABOUT A CEASEFIRE, AND NOT REALLY TO ACHIEVE IT....

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4754

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
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USIA WASHDC

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13. CONCERNING RELEASE OF PRISONERS, WE HAVE RELEASED ALL OF 5,081 CIVILIAN AND OVER 26,000 MILITARY PRISONERS. THE COMMUNISTS STILL HAVE OVER 26,000 OF OUR TROOPS IN THEIR HANDS AND WE HAVE A LIST OF OVER 7,000 CIVILIANS IN THEIR HANDS WHICH THEY DO NOT WANT TO TALK ABOUT.

14. AS FOR DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES, THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD AND THE REDUCTION OF VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES IN SVN, WE MADE A PROPOSAL TO SET UP COMMISSIONS TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS BUT SO FAR THEY HAVE NOT RESPONDED TO THIS PROPOSAL.

15. Q: (VIETNAMESE REPORTER) (1) THE SITUATION SHOWS THAT THE COMMUNISTS ARE EXPECTING SOME POLITICAL AND MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS. IN THE POLITICAL FIELD, DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS THE RESULT OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND EVENTS AFFECTING THE PRESTIGE OF PRESIDENT NIXON AS WELL AS THE POSSIBLE MEETING OF DR. KISSINGER AND LE DUC THO IN PARIS IN JUNE. FROM THESE DEVELOPMENTS MANY PEOPLE ARE THINKING OF THE POSSIBLE AMENDMENT OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN DENIED BY GVN OFFICIALS. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS? (2) IN THE MILITARY FIELD THE ICCS HAS SHOWN INEFFECTIVENESS BECAUSE THERE ARE NO SANCTIONS. BECAUSE OF THIS, DO YOU HAVE THE INTENTION OF ASKING THE SIGNATORIES OF THE ACT OF PARIS TO REQUEST THE UNITED NATIONS TO SEND TROOPS TO VIETNAM? (3) HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF MEETING MADAME BINH?

16. A: AS FOR THE INTENTIONS OF THE COMMUNISTS IN SABOTAGING THE TALKS, I DON'T WANT TO SPECULATE. I CAN ONLY SAY THAT AT THE PRESENT TIME THERE IS NO SURE INFORMATION ABOUT ANY SUCH MEETING. AS FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF RECONVENING THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT PARIS, THE RVN FOLLOWS THE PATH OF PEACE AND THEREFORE I WELCOME ANYTHING WHICH COULD HELP RESTORE PEACE.

17. BUT IT IS NOT A MATTER OF A NEW MEETING OR CONFERENCE OR NEGOTIATIONS. IT IS A MATTER OF WHETHER THE COMMUNISTS HAVE GOODWILL FOR PEACE TO APPLY THE PARIS AGREEMENT OR NOT. IF THEY ARE, WE CAN HAVE PEACE; IF NOT, WE WILL NOT HAVE PEACE, AND NO MEETING, CONFERENCE OR TALKS WOULD BE USEFUL.

18. Q: (NYT) CAN WE SAY THE PARIS AGREEMENT IS A DEAD LETTER? DOES IT CEASE TO HAVE MEANING OR IS THERE HOPE OF REVIVING IT?

19. A: (IN ENGLISH) I REFUSE TO CONSIDER THE PARIS AGREEMENT AS A DEAD LETTER. THE GVN RESPECTS IT AND WANTS TO IMPLEMENT IT AND IT IS UP TO THE COMMUNISTS TO SHOW GOODWILL FOR PEACE.
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20. Q: (VIETNAMESE REPORTER) YOU HAVE SAID YOU INTEND TO MEET NORTH VIETNAMESE LEADERS, BUT HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF MEETING MADAME BINH?

21. A: I AM BY NATURE A PERSON WHO LIKES COMPANY AND WHO IS WILLING TO MEET ANYBODY WHO WANTS TO SEE HIM, BUT IN THIS CASE THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMUNIST SIDE COME FROM HANOI SO IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE FOR ME TO MEET THE FOREIGN MINISTER OR SOME OTHER HIGH OFFICIAL FROM HANOI.

22. Q: (CDN) YOU SAID YOU REFUSE TO CONSIDER THE PARIS AGREEMENT A DEAD LETTER, BUT IN VIEW OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE IT WAS SIGNED IS THERE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE IT WILL WORK ANY BETTER THAN THE 1954 ACCORDS? IS THERE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE THE 1973 AGREEMENT WILL WORK BETTER IN THE FUTURE?

23. A: THE AGREEMENT CAN WORK IF THE COMMUNISTS WILL SHOW GOODWILL FOR PEACE.

24. Q: (VIETNAMESE REPORTER) YOU SAY YOU ARE WILLING TO RETURN TO THE PARIS TALKS ON CONDITION THAT THE COMMUNIST WILL RETURN THOSE AREAS ILLEGALLY OCCUPIED AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. (1) IS THIS AN INFLEXIBLE CONDITION? (2) CAN YOU GIVE A FIGURE ON THE SIZE OF THE AREAS OCCUPIED BY THE COMMUNISTS SINCE THE PARIS AGREEMENT?

25. A: AS I SAID THE GVN IS WILLING TO RETURN TO LA CELLE-ST. CLOUD WHEN THE COMMUNIST SIDE SHOWS GOODWILL THROUGH CONCRETE ACTS; THEN I GAVE SOME EXAMPLES. THE HABIT OF RAISING CONDITIONS IS THE HABIT OF THE OTHER SIDE, NOT OF THIS SIDE.

26. THE DETERMINATION OF AREAS ILLEGALLY OCCUPIED BY THE COMMUNISTS IS A FUNCTION OF THE TPJMC WHICH HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO DO IT BECAUSE OF THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNISTS. I WOULD NOT TRY TO TAKE THE PLACE OF THE TPJMC.

27. Q: (VIETNAMESE REPORTER, NOT HEARD CLEARLY) (1) IF THE DEADLOCK CONTINUES FOR A LONG TIME AND THE COMMUNISTS INTENSIFY THEIR VIOLATIONS, WHAT WILL THE ATTITUDE OF THE GVN BE? (2) WOULD THE UNITED STATES INTERVENE? (3) WILL THE VIETNAM UNCLASSIFIED

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ISSUE EVENTUALLY BE SOLVED BY A NEW AGREEMENT OR WILL THE FIGHTING EVENTUALLY GROW INTO A NEW WORLD WAR?

28. A: WHAT WILL THE GVN DO IF THERE ARE BIG NEW ATTACKS? THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE RVN LOVE PEACE BUT ARE DETERMINED TO DEFEND SOUTH VIETNAM'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION. AS FOR WHAT THE U. S. WILL DO, I CANNOT REPLY FOR THE UNITED STATES BUT I NOTE THE LETTER SECRETARY KISSINGER ADDRESSED TO SENATOR KENNEDY EXPLAINED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS POLITICAL AND MORAL OBLIGATIONS TOWARD THE PRESERVATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. AS FOR THE THIRD QUESTION, THE SOLUTION FOR VN LIES IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT, WHICH CALLS FOR CARRYING OUT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE THROUGH GENERAL ELECTIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION. END TEXT.
MARTIN

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